

What is claimed is:

1. A method for controlling the use of digital content in accordance with usage rights information associated with the digital content and specifying a manner of use for the digital content, the method comprising:

generating a request, from a client device, for digital content;

receiving the request at a content distributor repository;

downloading the content and usage rights information associated with the content from the content distributor repository to the client device; and

enforcing the usage rights information with a repository coupled to the client device to render the content by a rendering engine of the client device only in accordance with the manner of use.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the usage rights information further includes at least one condition, and the enforcing step comprises checking the status of the at least one condition and rendering the content only if the at least one condition is satisfied.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the content distributor repository comprises a content selection repository and a content storage repository, and the content selection repository receives a request for content in the receiving step and causes the content storage repository to download the content in the downloading step.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the client device further includes a rights management component, and in the enforcing step, the rights management component determines if a client instruction for rendering is in accordance with the usage rights information and only permits the rendering engine to render the content if the instruction is in accordance with the usage rights information.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the rendering engine comprises a web browser.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the content comprises educational course material.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the content selection repository comprises a learning management server.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the content is SCORM compliant.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of authorizing the client device prior to the downloading step.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the authorizing step comprises downloading at least one authorization key to the client device.

11. The method of claim 7, wherein the step of generating a request comprises selecting an educational course from a learning management server, transmitting content description information from the learning management server to the client device, and submitting the content description information as at least part of the request.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of downloading comprises downloading content from a content storage device, and downloading usage rights information from a rights storage device.

13. The method of claim 4, wherein the enforcing step comprises verifying the integrity of the rendering engine.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the rendering engine includes a printer.

15. A system for controlling rendering of content in accordance with usage rights information associated with the content and specifying a manner of use for the content, the system comprising:

a content distributor repository having content and usage rights information stored therein; and

a client device adapted to use a rendering engine and a rights management component for enforcing usage rights information to thereby permit the rendering engine to only render content in accordance with usage rights associated with the content.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein the content distributor repository comprises a learning management server, and a content storage repository.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein the content distributor repository further comprises a rights repository.

18. The system of claim 15, wherein the rights management component is operative to check the status of at least one condition specified by the usage rights information and permit the rendering engine to render content only if the at least one condition is satisfied.

19. The system of claim 17, wherein the client device is operative to select education related content from the learning management server, receive content description information from the learning management server, submit a request to the content distributor repository including the content description information, and receive content corresponding to the content description information from the content storage repository.

20. The system of claim 15, wherein the rendering engine and the rights management component are part of a rendering system including a repository device.

21. The system of claim 15, wherein the rendering engine and the rights management component are part of a rendering system including a non-repository device.

22. The system of claim 21, wherein the non-repository device includes a printer.

23. The system of claim 15, wherein the client device is not a repository, and the content is rendered on the client device.

24. A device for controlling the use of digital content in accordance with usage rights information associated with the digital content and specifying a manner of use for the digital content, the device comprising:

means for generating a request for digital content to a content distributor repository; and

means for downloading the content and usage rights information associated with the content from the content distributor repository,

wherein the usage rights information is enforced with a repository coupled to the device to render the content by a rendering engine of the device only in accordance with the manner of use.

25. The device of claim 24, wherein the usage rights information further includes at least one condition, and the enforcing of usage rights information includes checking the status of the at least one condition and rendering the content only if the at least one condition is satisfied.

26. The device of claim 24, wherein the content distributor repository comprises a content selection repository and a content storage repository, and the content selection repository receives a request for content and causes the content storage repository to download the content.

27. The device of claim 26, wherein the device further includes a rights management component, the rights management component determines if a client instruction for rendering is in accordance with the usage rights information and only permits the rendering engine to render the content if the instruction is in accordance with the usage rights information.

28. The device of claim 26, wherein the rendering engine comprises a web browser.

29. The device of claim 28, wherein the content comprises educational course material.

30. The device of claim 29, wherein the content selection repository comprises a learning management server.

31. The device of claim 29, wherein the content is SCORM compliant.

32. The device of claim 24, wherein the device is authorized prior to the downloading of the content.

33. The device of claim 32, wherein the downloading means includes means for downloading at least one authorization key.

34. The device of claim 30, wherein the means for generating the request comprises means for selecting an educational course from a learning management server, means for receiving content description information from the learning management server, and means for submitting the content description information as at least part of the request.

35. The device of claim 24, wherein the downloading means includes means for downloading content from a content storage device, and means for downloading usage rights information from a rights storage device.

36. The device of claim 24, further comprising means for verifying the integrity of the rendering engine.

37. The device of claim 24, wherein the rendering engine includes a printer.